

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1-6. (Cancelled).

7. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23, wherein said promotional offers relate to a plurality of products organized in taxonomic product groupings, and the method further comprises:

providing a product grouping probability profile associating with each said product grouping a measure of the probability that a customer will purchase a product from said product grouping; and

deriving said score for each said combination of customer and promotional offer from the measure of probability associated with each product grouping containing a product subject to the promotional offer.

8. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 7, further comprising:

providing access to a transaction history database for at least a substantial portion of said plurality of customers, wherein the database associates with each customer of said substantial portion an identification of transactions engaged in by the customer and an identification of products previously purchased by the customer in each of the transactions;

providing a transaction summary data structure associating with each said customer the total number of transactions the customer has engaged in and the numbers of transactions including each said product grouping;

averaging the product groupings per transaction from said transaction summary data structure for at least a portion of said customers; and

deriving said measure of probability associated with each said product grouping from the averaged product groupings per transaction for the associated product grouping.

9. (Original) The method of claim 7, further comprising:
normalizing said product grouping probability profile for an individual customer to reflect a relative probability of said individual customer purchasing from a product grouping with respect to an average probability for a customer to purchase from said product grouping.

10. (Original) The method of claim 7, further comprising:
applying preprogrammed targeting criteria embodying a marketing strategy to said product grouping probability profile to provide a profile of offer scores.

11. (Original) The method of claim 10, wherein
said marketing strategy includes at least one targeting product grouping and a promoted product grouping linked to said at least one targeting product grouping; and
said promotional offers are distributed only to customers having a high probability of acceptance from said at least one targeting product grouping.

12. (Original) The method of claim 11, further comprising:
providing a taxonomy of said product groupings;
wherein said at least one targeting product grouping is defined in reference to said taxonomy.

13. (Original) The method of claim 11, wherein said marketing strategy includes a MoveStock strategy.

14. (Original) The method of claim 11, wherein said marketing strategy includes an UpSell strategy.

15. (Original) The method of claim 11, wherein said marketing strategy includes a CrossSell strategy.

16. (Original) The method of claim 11, wherein said marketing strategy includes a Reward strategy.

17. (Original) The method of claim 11, wherein said marketing strategy includes a BrandChange strategy.

18. (Currently Amended) In an electronic system for distributing promotional offers, a method of adjusting the distribution of limited quantities of promotional offers from a plurality of promotional offers to a plurality of customers comprising:

providing, for each combination of customer and promotional offer from said pluralities, a measure of the acceptance probability that the customer will accept the promotional offer; presenting the measures of acceptance probabilities for an individual customer in a graphical display on said electronic system,

wherein said graphical display includes a plurality of graphic elements, one said graphic element being associated with each said measure of acceptance probability provided for said individual customer at least for the highest ranking of said measures;

enabling adjustment of said measures of acceptance probability by movement of the associated graphic elements; and

selecting, by a computing device, a limited quantity of offers from said plurality of offers for distribution to said individual customer,

wherein said limited quantity of offers are selected substantially in descending order of said measures of acceptance probabilities as adjusted in said enabling step; and
distributing at least one of the limited quantity of offers to said individual customer.

19. (Original) The method of claim 18, wherein said graphical display comprises a bar chart, said graphic elements comprise individual bars of said bar chart, and said movement comprises dragging said bars to lengthen and shorten them and thereby increase and decrease the associated measure of acceptance probability.

20. (Currently Amended) A method of distributing limited quantities of promotional offers to a plurality of customers utilizing a transaction history database comprising an identification of transactions engaged in and an identification of products previously purchased by one or more customers, said method comprising:

deriving a historical purchase probability profile from said transaction history database for at least a portion of the customers in said database and for a plurality of product groupings in said database, said historical purchase probability profile providing for each individual customer

and for each individual product grouping a measure of the probability that said individual customer will purchase a product from said individual product grouping;

for each customer, applying a statistical model to said purchase probability profile for the customer to determine estimated probabilities that the customer will purchase one or more products from said product groupings;

selecting, by a computing device, for distribution to each customer the offers associated with the highest estimated probability which satisfy one or more constraints,

wherein one of the one or more constraints is a limitation on the quantity of promotional offers for a particular product that may be distributed in aggregate to all customers; and

distributing one or more of the selected offers to one or more of the customers.

21. (Original) The method of claim 20 wherein said statistical model is an empirical Bayesian statistical model.

22. (Original) The method of claim 20 wherein one or more of said product groupings includes one and only one product.

23. (Currently Amended) In an electronic system for distributing promotional offers, a method of targeting a plurality of customers from a customer database for distribution of limited quantities of promotional offers from a plurality of promotional offers in accordance with one or more constraints on the quantity of promotional offers to be distributed and/or on the selection of the customers to whom promotional offers are to be distributed, the method comprising:

generating a plurality of scores for said plurality of customers, each said score being associated with one said customer and with one said offer, and each said score measuring a probability that the associated customer will make a purchase in accordance with the associated offer;

identifying, by a computing device, the highest score in said plurality of scores and identifying the customer substantially scoring said highest score;

targeting customers of said plurality with personalized offer lists, wherein each said identified customer's personalized offer list is generated in said electronic system by assigning to the personalized list for each said identified customer the offers associated with said highest score which satisfy said one or more constraints; and

successively repeating said identifying and assigning steps for the next highest successive score; and

distributing one or more of the offers to one or more of the customers.

24. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23, wherein said promotional offers relate to a plurality of products organized in taxonomic groupings, and the method further comprises:

basing the scores associated with one or more of said offers on the grouping probability that a customer will purchase any product in a given taxonomic grouping.

25. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 24 wherein a score is based on said grouping probability and the offer associated with said score is for a product included in said given taxonomic grouping.

26. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 24 wherein a score is based on said grouping probability and the offer associated with said score is for a product not included in said given taxonomic grouping.

27. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23 wherein said one or more constraints include a limit on the number of offers delivered to any individual customer and said method further comprises:

performing said assigning step for each said identified customer only a number of times equal to said limit.